

AN INTRODUCTORY

TO THE

Sixteenth Annual Course of Lectures

IN THE

HOMŒOPATHIC MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA.

DELIVERED OCTOBER 12TH, 1863,

BY PETER S. HITCHENS, M. D.,

PROFESSOR OF DESCRIPTIVE AND SURGICAL ANATOMY.

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PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

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1863.



AN INTRODUCTORY

CONFERENC

Sixteenth Annual Conference of Teachers

ORTHOPATHIC MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

Delivered October 12th, 1888

BY PETER S. WITCHES, M.D.

LECTURE ON NERVOUS AND MENTAL DISEASES

Yours truly, Peter S. Witches, M.D., Lecturer in Orthopaedic Medicine, Orthopaedic Medical College of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

PUBLISHED BY THE COLLEGE

How the mind is affected by the various diseases of the nervous system

I remain yours truly,

P. S. Witches

Orthopaedic Medical College of Pennsylvania

2 A WASHINGTON STREET, PHILADELPHIA

1888



## CORRESPONDENCE.

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PHILADELPHIA, OCT. 27, 1863.

PROF. P. S. HITCHENS:

*Dear Sir,*—The members of the class appointed the undersigned a Committee to express their high appreciation of your Introductory to the Sixteenth Annual Course of Lectures, and to respectfully solicit a copy for publication. They also desire you to accept their assurance of esteem and gratitude for your unceasing efforts for their improvement.

Very truly and respectfully,

HENRY F. HUNT, R. I.,	} Committee.
HORACE C. BARTLETT, Vt.,	
NATHAN WIGGIN, Me.,	
V. R. TINDALL, Del.,	
JOSEPH R. TANTUM, N. J.,	
CHARLES H. LEE, Pa.,	
W. SAVAGE, Va.	

W. L. FARRINGTON, *President*.

J. ELY, *Secretary*.

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PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 14, 1863.

GENTLEMEN:

Your favor of the 27th ult., requesting a copy of the Lecture introductory to the present course, was duly received and in reply would say apologetically, that it was not prepared with a view to its publication. But as it does contain many facts which exemplify the truth of the law implied in the maxim that "extremes meet," I cheerfully comply with your request, and hope that not a few, may be enabled to see the obvious tendency of the whole medical profession towards Homœopathy. Please accept, in behalf of the Class which you have the honor to represent, the assurance of my highest regard.

I remain yours truly,

P. S. HITCHENS.

Messrs. HENRY F. HUNT, and others, Committee.



CORRESPONDENCE  
AND EXPLANATIONS

TO THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS

1907-1908

THE CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS, held at the University of Chicago, from September 10 to 15, 1907, was a most successful one. The members of the association, who were gathered from all parts of the country, were able to discuss the various subjects of the conference in a most thorough and interesting manner. The results of the conference are given in the following pages.

THE CONFERENCE

THE CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

FROM SEPTEMBER 10 TO 15, 1907

THE CONFERENCE WAS OPENED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

AND BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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AN INTRODUCTORY  
TO THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL COURSE OF LECTURES  
IN THE  
*Homœopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania.*

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SUBJECT—"EXTREMES MEET."

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*Gentlemen Students of Medicine :*

The Faculty, as some of you doubtless are aware, adopted, some years ago, as a standing regulation, that the task of delivering the Introductory Lecture of the session, should be assumed in turn, by each of the Professors. It lessens, in some degree, the feeling of responsibility incident to the occasion, to know that I have been assigned to this post, not from any recognition of fitness for its requirements, but because, in the order of time, I have been called to fill it, as I would to perform any other allotted and customary duty. Knowing this, and the kindness with which those of you whom I have been accustomed to meet here, have been pleased ever to reward me, it is needless, I am sure, to deprecate all attempts at criticism. I have only been able, in the hurry of engagements which, of late, have been unexpectedly pressing; and at times when I was unfitted, mentally and physically, for the effort, to group together a few thoughts, which I shall offer to you this evening, almost in the same crude and ill digested state, in which they first occurred to me. A wise custom has allowed us, in this opening hour of the session, to forsake the routine of technical studies and to discuss freely and unreservedly those general topics, or any one of them, which concern us as men. I shall therefore take advantage to the fullest extent of the license thus accorded me, and will ask your attention for a short time, to a homely adage, which seems, naturally suggested by the aspect of the times; and which contains in itself the germ of much practical wisdom: "EXTREMES MEET."

It has fallen to the lot of the physician, as a close observer of nature and of man, more especially than to that of others, to notice the apparent absence of entire harmony in the organism both of man and of the material world. It is a favorite tenet, as we know, with



theologians, that we live under an imperfect dispensation, and, without discussing the value of this truth as part of a system of religion, we must, all of us, admit its correctness as an isolated fact. Nature, herself, seems gifted with the consciousness of her defect; and in every movement she has been striving, as it were, to regain an equilibrium which she has lost, or an equilibrium which, as yet, has always eluded her. In the various steps towards the attainment of her object, she has executed experiments of the most conflicting character; and involving the most opposite results. At one time, her sole and pervading principle seemed to be the development of physical strength. She began this process in the vegetable kingdom. The vast growths of flora, now shown to us in the carboniferous remains, conclusively indicate this fact. Vegetation, apparently the only form of life in the secondary geologic era, sprang everywhere in the most rank and gigantic luxuriance. The qualities of richness and grace seem to have been in this era altogether subordinate to the one quality of strength; and the fruits and grains which now make up the value of the harvest, and the flowers which contribute to its beauty, were altogether unknown.

Passing abruptly from her efforts in the vegetable kingdom, Nature made her next essay in the formation of animal life. Here again her prevailing idea seems to have been the creation of physical force, but in new forms and under new conditions. The most formidable monsters moved in the waters and on the land—every variety of animal life—bird, beast, fish and reptile—was endowed with the most powerful and at the same time, destructive qualities. Expending her whole energy upon the animal nature, she seems to have neglected in a measure the vegetable kingdom; and to have allowed the older and largest types to perish.

With as much abruptness, she began a new era. The old forms of vegetable and animal life, gave place to new and smaller types. New elements succeeded that of vast physical strength. In the vegetable productions of this era, fruitfulness and beauty were the great characteristics; and in the animal world the leading types were distinguished less by strength and ferocity, than by agility and grace. To this era, man appertains. In him as her crowning work, Nature seems to have striven to unite her two favorite qualities, strength and beauty. The strength which before she had developed in ponderous physical growth, she now sought to wield through the action of his mental forces; and, to find in his mental superiority, a compensation for the physical weakness, which seems allied with beauty.

If, however, we take man as the last and finest type of her development, we shall still be met by evidences of the same manifold and startling inconsistencies. Regard him, first in the most prominent character in which he appears to us: that of governor and govern-



ed; and, assuming that the true harmony of government is founded in its capacity to dispense the largest amount of happiness to the greatest number, how soon do we find that, under every system, he has fallen short almost of an approximation to that harmony? He tries, in one quarter, the lawless but absolute freedom of the savage state. He educates his physical nature at the expense of all his nobler endowments of mind and soul. If he can be said to attain to happiness in this estate, it is at best the indifference of the brute; an indifference indeed, even less to be envied, because mixed in the lowest and most degraded, with some glimmering consciousness of moral degradation, or passing from man in the licentious freedom of the savage state, regard him as he appears in the same age and climate under the tyranny of an absolute despotism. He has exchanged the weakness which results from the want of all government, for the strength which springs from the unqualified dominion of a single will. But, the very power which he has thus attained, is in itself the badge of his submission. The strength of the mass as shown in the power of the ruler, is made up from the slavery of the individual, and of the weakness of the governed. Like the beast of burden, infinitely superior in physical power to his driver, yet, rendered by a long course of discipline, almost incapable of action, except in obedience to the will of his owner, so, man, under the slavery of an absolute rule, loses all power of personal action, and becomes strong only as swayed by another's will; becomes in a word, most a man, only when most a slave. The happiness of man in this condition is the happiness not of the brute who roams at large in unrestricted freedom, and is thereby fitted to grapple with nature for the means of sustenance, but is rather that of the brute reclaimed from his original wildness, only to hold his life and movements at the bidding of his tamer. And perhaps, I shall not be accused of attempting a paradox, when I affirm that after passing from man in these opposite extremes of absolute freedom and absolute rule, to man as he appears in the stage of highest enlightenment, we shall still find that he has equally failed in attaining the long coveted prize of felicity. Boast as confidently and justly as we may of the swift progress of our civilization, not one of us can shut his eyes, to the fact that that civilization has brought with it evils from which less favored communities are free. In the long catalogue of weakness and deformity and disease induced by artificial and unnatural modes of life; in the thousand petty restraints and annoyances arising from conventional habits and customs; in the wants constantly increasing with the increase of our conveniences and luxuries; and, above all, in the fierce and terrible competitions of different pursuits, and of those engaged in the same calling, whereby the rich are made richer, and the poor poorer; we find that man in this his noblest estate, has failed in his grand endeavor; and forced,



when asked the test question, "By how much has civilization increased your happiness?" to take his stand upon the same platform, and to own in this respect his brotherhood with the savage and the serf; as he illustrates equally with them, in his experiments of government, the truth of the adage with which I started, that "EXTREMES MEET."

This truth, seen at once in a glance at the practical working of human governments, is further exemplified by other facts in the history of man. It seems to be a favorite phenomenon in that history, that conditions, the most opposite and contradictory, should arise at different times and even at the same period, among the same people. What form of savage life could be more degraded than that of the ancient Britons, the Saxons, the Danes? And yet, out of what better materials has a nobler civilization sprung? Or what deadlier hatred,—a hatred computed by centuries, and deepening for a time with its years,—ever stimulated human passion, than that which separated, as by an Ocean, the Norman and the Saxon? And yet, not closer is the fusion of metals in the flame, than has been the union in the same national character, of these once conflicting elements. The slow course of time, which alone has been able to work this seeming miracle in the case of the English nation, has wrought elsewhere changes almost as great. The people who once imprisoned Galileo for asserting the truth of his discovery in astronomy, now point to that philosopher and to that very discovery, in proof of the intellectual nobility of the race from which such a philosopher and such a discovery could spring. The nation that banished Dante and ridiculed him, as an imposter, now founds its pretensions to the leadership in poetry upon the productions of his single pen. The nation which permitted Columbus to die neglected and in poverty, now claims, and perhaps justly, that the fame of his discovery eclipses that of all later human achievements. Compare the ten pounds which were paid to John Milton as the price of "Paradise Lost," with the value which posterity has put upon that immortal poem. Contrast the times in which a mob, representing the spirit of the English nation, tore up the bones of Oliver Cromwell from their grave, and wreaked upon the ashes of the dead a vengeance which they never dared to visit upon the living, with the time, when Macaulay, applauded by two kindred nations, eulogizes the victim of these enormities, as one of the noblest benefactors of England. And on the other hand, the greatest military successes, the most unbridled power, the most coveted genius, have not been sufficient to rescue from deserved contempt the memory of the childish ambition of an Alexander, or a cruelty of a Henry the Eighth, or the licentious ribaldry of a Rousseau and Voltaire. The lessons which History furnishes upon this point is a lesson of the profoundest philosophy. It is a lesson of retribution. It teaches



us that in the world of men as in the world of nature, there is a constant tendency towards an equilibrium of forces; and that however, vice and folly by some successful combination of events may attain extreme ascendancy, mankind, by the force of an irresistible instinct, will not forever submit to that dominion, but will, tardily but surely, acknowledge its allegiance to the right. Take a single illustration of our subject from another source. Perhaps in no sphere of human activity is man more prone to forsake the just balance of truth, than in that of religion. From the oracle to which he has committed his highest hopes, he has borrowed also, his deepest prejudices. The very spirit of enthusiasm which has nerved him to brave in his own person the terrors of a lingering death for the sake of a single tenet of his creed, has, in the moment of his power, made him at times the bitterest persecutor of those to whom an opposite dogma is equally dear and equally sacred. The folly of a bigotry so often illustrated in the disputes on a single doctrine, which on the side of its votaries will listen to no argument, but proclaims its own infallibility, and on the side of its oppressors, is attempted to be subverted by the terrors of persecution, is seen in the fact that any extreme of religious enthusiasm is sure to be followed by a corresponding extreme of irreligion. And, humiliating as the idea may be to the earnest sectarian, the truth seems to be that an undue and extreme prominence to the religious element in any age, is almost equally pernicious with the absence of the religious element altogether. The austere religion of the Puritan was made to intertwine itself with all the actions of his life; his prayers were obtruded into the counting house, and gave an odor of sanctity to the courts and parliaments strangely at variance with some of their decrees, his religion deformed the whole fabric of his social intercourse. It was sinful to laugh; it was profanity to utter a joke or to attempt a witicism. His principles, right in themselves, were intensely wrong in their extreme application. Because the main business of life is a serious thing, he deemed all gladness fearfully sinful; because retribution in some shape or other, awaits the perpetrator of vice, he would anticipate the torments of perdition in the punishment he meted out himself to the offender. The sad results of his fanaticism were seen, even in his own age. Men of abandoned principles who coveted the political power which was engrossed by the Puritan, and to whom every system of religion was equally indifferent, attached themselves with eagerness to the cause of the dominant sect. No allusions. Outwardly the most zealous sticklers for its customs and dogmas, but shamed, by their secret abominations, the entire profession of the Christian Faith. Reading now the history of that period, it is almost a relief to turn to the narrative of the reaction which followed. The restoration of Charles the Second was the signal for casting off the galling fetters



of ecclesiastical rule. The religion whose profession had just served as the only passport to political eminence was now openly and everywhere derided, and the very men who had been foremost to proclaim themselves its converts, were now in the ranks of its earliest and deadliest enemies. I know of no more impressive lesson in all history than that afforded by the events of this period. In the space of a single lifetime was seen the culmination of two distinct epochs, which were flatly contradictory in their respective appearances, and yet, by an irresistible law, leading to one and the same result. For I know not to which condition the palm of infamy should be awarded; the religion so monstrously perverted from the true spirit of Christianity, that its only practical working is to foster a race of hypocrites and imposters; or the irreligion so childish in its folly, as to be safely practiced only by buffoons. So true is it that in religion as in government, "EXTREMES MEET."

I do not, gentlemen, wish to weary you with this train of thought, but there is one interesting and practical view in which this adage will be found eminently true of man as an individual. I will not say, as some philosophers tell us, that all vices are only virtues pushed to an extreme; but I will say, that every vice has in it some affinity, in its beginnings at least, to a corresponding virtue. And unless the faculties which make up the mental and moral nature of a man be very evenly balanced, either by a happy adjustment of those powers, or by the controlling force of religious principles, the constant tendency will be towards the undue development of one of those faculties to the lasting detriment of all the others. Powers, in themselves excellent and noble, become by this very development or perversion rather, the sources of the man's debasement. Thus, the prudent man, following too much the bent of his prevailing faculty, becomes avaricious; the cautious man grows deceitful; the brave man, rash and arrogant. The terrible truth is, that, just in proportion to the strength of the virtues, will be, unless counter-balanced and controlled, the strength of the opposing vices.

The strong will of the child battling against its parents' commands, will, if unchecked, unless some miracle interpose, lead to the future man's undoing; but properly tempered by parental discipline, it will be the very lever by which he shall brave calumny, and withstand oppression, and everywhere and always stand up for the Right. Society has much to answer for in this respect. It stamps with its brand of opprobrium and provides too often its dungeon for the man, in whom, had a wise and benignant care been extended him, it would have found, perhaps, its greatest benefactor. No student of human nature needs to be told that Martin Luther was a man of indomitable will and headstrong passions; we are assured indeed by his historian that his infirmities of temper increased upon him and embittered his declining years. And yet, we know



equally well, that under a rigorous self-discipline, they served only as the motive power to other and nobler faculties, and enabled him, in the face of an opposition such as the world had never seen, to stem the tide of priestly intolerance and to open a new era in history. Luther the Reformer was but a step removed from Luther the Outcast. Had the inscrutable designs of Providence permitted a single circumstance in his early training to be omitted, had his home in childhood lain but a few miles distant; had he lived a few years earlier or a few years later, the very qualities which made him the world's friend, might have made him the world's outlaw. Remembering the story of his life, let us learn a lesson of encouragement and charity. Remember that there is no such thing in nature as unmixed evil. When the wretch, polluted by a thousand crimes, hunted down by society and regarded by all men as a moral fugitive, comes before you for your sentence, remember the terrible force of habit and circumstance. Search out the hidden springs of his actions: speak a kind word of hope and encouragement and, perhaps, (and remember greater marvels have happened,) you will find that the very instruments of his undoing, have become in your hands, the means of his rescue. As, in our own land the traveller following the courses of two mighty rivers begins with the one on the borders of the Atlantic, and with the other on those of the far off Pacific, and finds the two streams meeting at last in a little brook in the extreme north west; so the tide of life moves from the same source in far different channels; and in the history of every man there lies somewhere a point at which "EXTREMES MEET."

Quitting the sphere of morals we find the law implied in this maxim true not only in every other department of human activity, but that it is also eminently true of the changes which take place in Nature. "Nature, it is said, in completing her cycles never exactly repeats herself, nor returns to the same point, but tends towards a higher state of existence at each succeeding cycle. Thus the mineral, ending its last cycle as such, gyrates through the next cycle as a vegetable: next through that of an animal: next through that of man:" next through that of an immortal spirit. Here again "EXTREMES MEET."

There are, gentlemen, modifications of this law which prevail to a much greater extent than what we are, as casual observers, likely to suspect. One of these modifications is represented in the many cases in which extremes appear to exist in the relation of cause and effect. The planets move in paths which are not exactly circles, but circles elongated. The path of the comet, which as we know, is a very eccentric, or elongated, ellipsis, differs only in degree from that of the planet, in its departure from the exact form of the circle. Now it is this very eccentricity, or apparent irregularity, by virtue of which the heavenly bodies move with such transcendent regularity.



The comet shoots off from the sun unknown millions of miles, only to approach, with equal speed, by that very extreme proceeding, immensely nearer to it, than the soberer planet who never goes off in such high dudgeon. The perfection of our delicious fruits depending upon their rich, melting ripeness, by that very quality, is only a hair's-breadth removed from rottenness. I think there is no better illustration of that law thus modified, than the action of drugs in the cure of diseases. Of all the noxious agencies to which we submit our bodies, the extremes, as all must admit, are the active poisons. These health destroying—yea life destroying—drugs are administered to the body, already more or less overwhelmed by deleterious influences. Here the question arises, Is there a speedier death in consequence, when these drugs are properly administered? No: but the death dealing dose brings back the departed health, and re-establishes the tottering citadel of life. Again, many of these poisons which are deadly in a given dose become almost harmless when given in much larger or extreme doses. Another modification of the law is seen in the law of reaction; a kind of *lex talionis* operation in nature, as well as in mind. It is exemplified in all of those cases in which there is a rebound from extreme force. The elastic ball hurled against a firm surface, is immediately rehurled in the opposite direction by virtue of the first impelling force. The extreme heat of the sun, which dries up the surface of the ground and every thing upon it, by the same operation provides for more liberally watering the same, by filling the atmosphere with vapor. By the same law, evils seem to work their own cure. The tyrant striving to extend his power by enslaving his subjects, loses what he might have properly exercised, while his subjects, reacting against his extreme exercise of that power, gain a state of freedom to which they would not else have aspired. Thus it was that our country gained its independence. Secessia made war for the sole purpose of riveting more firmly the fetters of the slave; and, lo! every manacle is either shivered or hopelessly broken. "Give a man rope enough and he will hang himself," is often said of one who is pursuing a perverse course. And it is only another way of stating the same law. It is also exemplified in the operations of nature. A particularly fine day is often called a weather breeder. It is often said, and truthfully, that it rains too hard to last long. On the contrary it is said, that a calm is soon followed by a storm. And in a severe storm, the sailor never witnesses a sudden lull, that he does not use all dispatch to prepare for as sudden a return of the storm, and with increased severity. These are all examples of reaction against extremes of action. Let a fire be kindled in the heart of a city, within certain limits, the fury of the flames is in proportion to the supply of fuel, when these limits are reached, the appliances of the fire department are sometimes powerless to make headway



against the progress of the flames. But these limits being passed—as has occurred several times in this and other cities—the severity of the fire stays its own ravages. Unlike many of the examples named, we can understand the philosophy of this phenomenon. The immense amount of heat by the conflagration causes a stupendous column of rarified air to rush madly to the upper atmosphere. To fill the space thus left void, from every direction the surrounding air rushes with whirlwind speed towards the centre of the fire; against which strong current, the flames can make no headway. And thus the material evil has cured itself by its extreme rashness. Gentlemen, I am afraid that I have detained you already too long with these general and desultory observations, but I feel that my work would be only half accomplished, if I failed to give to the subject its application. Homœopathy perhaps, owes its origin to the action of agents in accordance with this law. I think that the Old School practitioners had driven their methods of cure to such an extreme that mankind, in absolute self defence, reacted against such murderous means of saving life, and demanded something, that would cure more reasonably, more quickly, more safely and more pleasantly. And Homœopathy was Causation's answer to the imperative demand. I have spoken of Allopathy as using murderous methods of cure. I speak advisedly, as I wish to make it appear; because if this can be shown, of which there is no doubt, it will be evident that medical practice, or rather mal-practice had by degrees proceeded to a grave and really fearful extreme. And if there be, as I think I have shown there is, such a law of reaction, it should be exemplified in this case; and Homœopathy, as exhibited at present, would be the legitimate result of such a state of things. That their's is sometimes a murderous method of cure, may be evident from the following considerations among a vast number of similar ones; wherever the Allopaths have established the expectant method, or do-nothing method of cure, for the purpose of proving that Homœopathy is a do-nothing system, although while they—fortunately for the sake of suffering humanity—have utterly failed to do that, they have been very successful in proving what they did not intend, viz., that the expectant or do-nothing system which they established is more successful in curing its patients, than the Old School methods are in curing theirs. These experiments in the expectant method have proved two facts: 1st, that Homœopathy cures a greater or less number which the do-nothing method would allow to die; And 2d, that Allopathy kills a less or greater number which the do-nothing method would allow to live. Dr. Dietl, after having made the treatment of pneumonia by the expectant method a matter of rigid experiment for several years in one of the largest hospitals in Vienna, declared to the profession and to the world, "whoever, henceforth, treats pneumonia according to the established methods



of Allopathy, is verily guilty of the death of nine persons out of every hundred cases of pneumonia, who would have got well if they had taken no medicine." That method, all must admit, which kills nine out of a hundred patients, is surely a murderous one.

The celebrated Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, gave utterance to, in a public lecture, and afterwards published, the following verdict of the murderous character of Allopathic practice; (and, by the way, he has been, perhaps most righteously belabored by his bretheren all over the country, for daring to tell so bluntly, what many others have said more gingerly.) The learned Dr. says, "If all the medicine in the *Materia Medica* (The Allopathic *Materia Medica* of course)—save only Opium and wine,—had long ago been thrown into the sea, it had been better for mankind, but all the worse for the fishes." I have—said a gentleman—much the same opinion of the Old School practice of medicine, as the old country doctor's veterinary physician intimated in his receipt. The veterinary physician usually made out his bills to the old Dr. for curing such or such a horse. On a certain occasion, one of the items should have been "for a colt" which died. But this was omitted in the bill. The old Dr. observed the omission and called the attention of the M. V. D. to it. He replied that it was not his custom to charge for doctoring horses that died on his hands. "Oh, that will never do," said the old Dr. in some trepidation. "That would be a dangerous precedent to establish!" *We* should not get a living if we were to act in that way! You must make out the whole bill." In obedience to orders, he made out the bill. "For curing Bill, Pomp and Fanny, ——— dollars and cents. For curing a colt till he died—ditto, ditto." The presumptive evidence is, I think, gentlemen, at least, quite strong, that Homœopathy sprung into existence by virtue of the reactive force in mankind against the abuses in the practice of the healing art.

The law that. "EXTREMES MEET," is true likewise of the sciences. It is, and should be, a matter of congratulation to us, that it is true of the science of medicine. The Allopathic physicians, with all the prestige of age and respectability, are beginning, to exemplify the law of "extremes meeting," shyly and cautiously, as befits the dignity of their venerable error, to adopt Homœopathy. It would be expecting too much of human nature, to suppose that the prejudices of many centuries, should be abandoned in a month, because a single man or body of men had demonstrated, no matter how clearly, their absurdity of practice. Pride in science, as in society when its wearer is forced to fall, must have its stepping stones to render the descent, however deep it may be, at least easy and dignified; and medical science is no exception to this rule. The practitioners of Allopathy have already found some of the steps for their descent, 1st, in the size of the dose: The size of the dose has gradually



been made smaller and smaller ever since the discovery of Homœopathy. Before Hahnemann lighted the lamp of medical science the doses were enormous, but now, they are either so much smaller or medicine so seldom given, especially in some diseases, that even Allopathic votaries, not unfrequently exclaim, when anything is said about the size of an Allopathic dose of medicine, Oh! my physician gives very little medicine. This is true, comparatively speaking, and we are glad it is so, for it is evidently a step in the right direction. 2d, The practice of cupping, leeching, bleeding and blistering is less frequently resorted to now, than even ten years ago. This is another step towards Homœopathy which cures disease without resorting to such heroic methods of treatment. And 3d, The gradual, yet not less sure, adoption by the Allopathic fraternity of *Eclecticism*. Dr Robley Dunglison, Prof. of the Institutes and Practice of Medicine in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, seems to have had an inkling of the almost certain merging of the Allopathic practice into that of the Eclectic. He says "*every judicious physician must be an eclectic.*" Eclectic physicians, or at least many of them, as it is well-known, in practice, claim, and perhaps justly, that they are homœopaths. Admitting this to be true, and, that all judicious Old School physicians should be eclectics. It requires no prophetic eye to foresee the verification of that law, which declares "*extremes meet,*" in the full and happy realization of all systems of medical practice finally, adopting Homœopathy as the *ultima thule* of medical science.

In view however of the vast stride which they have taken in this direction, and of the inherent reluctance of man to abandon an error, rendered easy and familiar by the long course of association and habit, we can—if the people will—afford to wait a few years for Truth fully to vindicate itself. Our duties and labors are with the masses, and we must look for our rewards where our benefits are most felt. The opinion of the people has always, in the long run, determined the value of a work of art, or a production in literature; why should it not with even greater confidence be relied on to determine the worth of an invention, a discovery, or a science! If the popular judgment be accepted as the umpire, we have no reason to doubt the verdict that "*extremes will meet.*"

And now, gentlemen, with these few hasty thoughts, I dismiss you to the duties of the Session, as ere long you will be dismissed from these walls to the larger duties of professional life. Bear with you ever through that work, a feeling of hopefulness. I should indeed be a poor adviser if I failed to tell you, that you will often have need of such a feeling: and that there will be much, very much in the midst of your daily engagements to test its strength and depress its buoyancy. You will meet with many emergencies in which your best sagacity will be at fault, and with others, only less hard to be borne,



in which a triumph of skill on which you may justly pride yourself, will receive neither appreciation nor gratitude. Do not let these dishearten you. Remember that our age has in it more of promise than of doubt. Remember that the darkest hour of the night only precedes the morning; that the sweetest and richest fruit springs from the bitterest kernel. If you will live wisely, it will not be long before you will meet with many such pleasant renderings of the maxim that "extremes meet." And here it strikes me almost compunctionously that I have taken only a one-sided view of the want of harmony that is seen in the life of nature and of man. For it is only to the eye of a narrow philosophy that this seeming discord exists; could we see with broader vision we should discover that what we call the doctrine of extremes, in nature, is really the sublime of harmony. It was a true instinct which prompted the Poet when he wrote:

"For I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

In the great circle of existence in which we live and move, nature with her boundaries blends with the universe which knows no limits! and time, with its little seasons, melts into eternity which has no years. We have but to make our own lives consistent with the requirements of duty, and we shall yet discover, that we have been adding to a harmony whose vastness and completeness we do not now comprehend.

I will now say, gentlemen, on behalf of the Faculty in conclusion what I should have said in the beginning, that we are glad to see you and hope that your stay with us may be for your present and future good.